

# SYLLABUS

## Class Meetings

Monday/Wednesday, 1:40-3:00pm, HLL 114

## Contact information

Instructor: Dr. Julien Musolino  
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Office hours: by appointment

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## REQUIREMENTS

### READING

No textbook has been assigned for this course. Instead, required readings (in the form of PDF files) are posted on SAKAI. In addition, I will mention a number of books throughout the class, bearing on various topics that we will discuss, any of which students are welcome to purchase and read. None of these books are required.

### EXAMS AND GRADES

Grades will be determined by performance on the following activities:

- **Midterm**

There will be 1 midterm exam taken in class. The midterm is scheduled on **October 22** will cover the first half of the course.

- **Assignments**

There will be three assignments due on **Sept. 26, Oct. 22, and Nov. 19**. Details will be discussed in class.

- **Final Exam**

The final exam is scheduled on **December 19, 8:00AM-11:00AM** and is CUMULATIVE (i.e., it covers the entire content of the course over the whole semester). For university policy regarding finals exams, please visit:

<http://registrar.rutgers.edu/NB/EXAMRULE.HTM>

### **Exam format**

All exams will have the same format and include some or all of the following activities:

- Multiple choice questions
- True/false
- Fill in the blank
- Short answer

### **Grades will be computed using the following weights**

- Midterm (1/3 of grade)
- Assignments (1/3 of grade)
- Final Exam (1/3 of grade)

### **Percentages converted to grades**

90% -100% --- A  
87% - 89% --- B+  
80% - 86% --- B  
77% - 79% --- C+  
70% - 76% --- C  
60% - 69% --- D  
59% - 0% --- F

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Exams and assignments**

Barring exceptional circumstances, all exams will be taken on the date they are assigned.

### **Academic Honesty**

Students in this class are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty and respect. Conduct other than this will be disciplined

following procedures detailed in Rutgers University policy on such matters. Academic dishonesty is defined as, but not limited to, plagiarism, harassment, cheating, disrupting behavior, or representing another student's work as your own. For further information on this topic, please visit:

<http://ctaar.rutgers.edu/integrity/policy.html>

### **Religious observances**

Rutgers University's policy on accommodations for religious observances or holidays is available at the following site:

<http://registrar.rutgers.edu/NB/ENROL-NB.HTM#religious>

# Schedule of Topics, Readings & Exams

## Fall 2012

| Week | Date               | Topic  | Assignments & Activities   |
|------|--------------------|--|--|
| 1    | Sept 05            | <b>Introduction</b>  |  |
| 2    | Sept 10<br>Sept 12 | <b>Part I: The big picture</b><br><b>Body and mind:</b> The basic problem and approaches |  |
| 3    | Sept 17<br>Sept 19 | <b>Modern minds:</b> The cognitive revolution and the computational brain                | <b>Reading:</b> The last wall to fall  |
| 4    | Sept 24<br>Sept 26 | Thinking machines<br><b>The hidden mind:</b> the role of unconscious cognitive processes | <b>Reading:</b> Do defaults save lives?<br><b>Assignment 1:</b> Soul searching |
| 5    | Oct 01<br>Oct 03   | Lifting the veil<br><b>Studying the mind:</b> the road to the ivory tower                | <b>Reading:</b> The truth about relativity                                     |
| 6    | Oct 08<br>Oct 10   | <b>Part II: The details</b><br><b>Language:</b> Minds, apples, and Planets               | <b>Reading:</b> genes, language, and the nature of scientific explanations     |
| 7    | Oct 15<br>Oct 17   | <b>Atypical minds:</b> Genes, language, and cognition                                    |  |
| 8    | Oct 22<br>Oct 24   | <b>Midterm Exam</b><br><b>Memory:</b> Total recall?                                      | <b>Assignment 2:</b> How free are you?   |
| 9    | Oct 29<br>Oct 31   | <b>Attention:</b> did you see the gorilla?   | <b>Reading:</b> A six pack of problems   |
| 10   | Nov 05<br>Nov 07   | <b>Deciding:</b> predictably irrational  | <b>Reading:</b> medical decision making  |
| 11   | Nov 12<br>Nov 14   | <b>Reasoning:</b> don't believe everything you think                                     |  |
| 12   | Nov 19<br>Nov 21   | <b>The hard problem:</b> a look at consciousness   | <b>Assignment 3:</b> exploring randomness                                      |

|    |                  |  |  |
|----|------------------|--|--|
|    |                  |  | <b>Reading:</b> The mystery of consciousness                     |
| 13 | Nov 26<br>Nov 28 | <b>Part III: Controversies</b><br><b>Science and mind:</b> making up one's mind about evolution and climate change | <b>Reading:</b> Childhood origins of adult resistance to science |
| 14 | Dec 03<br>Dec 05 | <b>Politics and mind:</b> freedom of thought in a democratic society?  | <b>Reading:</b> Chomsky on Orwell's problem                      |
| 15 | Dec 10<br>Dec 12 | <b>Religion and mind:</b> disembodied minds?   |  |
|    | Dec 19           | <b>Final Exam (8:00AM-11:00AM)</b>   |  |